

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 KINGST 03629 290404Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10 LAB-04  
NSAE-00 SIL-01 ICA-20 OPR-02 /060 W  
-----104899 292300Z /61  
R 281400Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0927

UNCLAS KINGSTON 3629

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: ELAB, JM  
SUBJECT: SCHOOL TEACHERS END STRIKE

REF: KINGSTON 3457

1. TEACHERS ON STRIKE SINCE APRIL 20 HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED BY THE JAMAICA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION (JTA) TO RESUME WORK TODAY.
2. AGREEMENT FOR RESUMPTION WAS REACHED AT THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AFTER MINISTER OF LABOUR WILLIAM ISAACS ACCEDED TO THE JTA'S REQUEST THAT A THREE-MAN BOARD OF INQUIRY BE SET UP TO INVESTIGATE THE DISPUTE. THE MINISTER ALSO HAD A MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF DEMOCRATIC TEACHERS (NUDT) WHICH REPRESENTS APPROXIMATELY 400 OF THE ISLAND'S 18,551 PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS WITH WHOM THE DECISION REACHED WITH THE JTA WAS DISCUSSED. THE NUDT ALSO AGREED TO A WORK RESUMPTION. THE BACK-TO-WORK AGREEMENT INCLUDED THE UNDERSTANDING THAT TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN THE STRIKE WILL NOT BE VICTIMIZED, NOR WILL THEY SUFFER ANY BREAK IN SERVICE AS A RESULT OF THE STRIKE.
3. THE TEACHERS WENT ON STRIKE ON APRIL 20 AFTER MINISTER OF FINANCE ERIC BELL INFORMED THEM THAT THEY WOULD BE GRANTED NO SALARY INCREASES BY THE GOJ DURING THE CURRENT

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1977/78 FINANCIAL YEAR. THEY ARE SEEKING AN ANNUAL SALARY INCREASE OF J\$1,040 ACROSS-THE-BOARD AND IMPROVEMENTS IN FRINGE BENEFITS SUCH AS HOUSING, MATERNITY LEAVE AND COMPENSATION FOR INJURY ON THE JOB. IN A NATIONWIDE TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCAST ON APRIL 19 MR. BELL SAID THAT NOT ONLY WAS THE GOVERNMENT UNABLE TO PAY THE INCREASES BECAUSE OF THE COUNTRY'S POOR FINANCIAL STATE, BUT THE

TEACHERS WERE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR ANY INCREASES UNTIL NEXT YEAR UNDER THEIR THREE-YEAR CONTRACT.

4. COMMENT: THE TEACHERS FEEL THAT THEY WERE LED TO BELIEVE THERE WOULD BE A SALARY ADJUSTMENT THIS YEAR, FOLLOWING A PARTIAL INCREASE IN 1976. THE GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES SET J\$10 A WEEK AS A MAXIMUM INCREASE, WHILE THE TEACHERS ARE ASKING J\$20 PER WEEK. THE INCREASES WOULD COST THE GOVERNMENT SOME J\$18 MILLION WHICH IT CANNOT AFFORD. IT APPEARS THAT THE TEACHERS HAVE AGREED TO CALL OF THE STRIKE WITHOUT ANY COMMITMENT TO YIELD ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT. IRVING

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Comment:**  
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